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DWR Releases Changes to State's Groundwater Basin Boundaries; Sets Stage for Sustainable Local Groundwater Management

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) today released the <u>final 2016 modifications</u> to California's groundwater basin boundaries, preparing the way for local agencies to bring their groundwater basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge under the historic <u>Sustainable Groundwater</u> <u>Management Act (SGMA)</u>. DWR is scheduled to present the final basin boundaries to the California Water Commission at its meeting in Sacramento today.

SGMA initially established the basin boundaries as defined in <u>Bulletin 118</u>, a comprehensive report on California groundwater resources that DWR periodically updates. SGMA also established a process for local agencies to request that DWR modify basin boundaries to assist local agencies in forming the required Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs). Of the 54 requests for changes to basin boundaries, DWR approved 39, denied 12, and three were deemed incomplete. Most of the modifications were made to basins in the Central Valley and included refinements reflecting waterways, county lines and geologic information.

DWR provides an online <u>Basin Boundary Assessment Tool</u> to inform local agencies and the public about the existing groundwater basin boundaries and other relevant geologic and geographic data. DWR's <u>Basin Boundary Modification Request System (BBMRS)</u> enabled local agencies to submit their requests for basin boundary modifications online and the public to view those requests and provide comment. DWR then published a draft list and held public meetings last summer and, after a technical review of the requests and public comments, DWR developed the final <u>Basin Boundary Modifications</u>.

The new basin boundaries will be included in the interim update of Bulletin 118, due out by January 1, 2017. Another basin boundary modification request period may be held in 2018 based on demand from local agencies and/or GSAs. Other important near-term dates on the SGMA timeline include:

 December 31, 2016 –DWR will post a report on Water Available for Replenishment on its website.

- November 14-17, 2016 DWR will conduct public meetings for input on its draft topic of Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- January 1, 2017 DWR will post BMPs on its website.
- June 30, 2017 Date by which local agencies in high- and medium-priority basins must form GSAs that cover the entire basin in order to avoid potential intervention by the State Water Resources Control Board.

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Every Californian should take steps to conserve water. Find out how at SaveOurWater.com.

